

Making PADMAN Work For You

Our easy to use *PADMAN Plan* can revolutionize your client's job search and make case management meetings more effective.

Step 1: Write the job title and field at the top of the page. *For example: Cook in Schools*

Since the employer's needs and concerns are different for every job, the PADMAN for each job will be different. Complete a *PADMAN Plan* for each type of job your client is applying for. It's not as much work as you may think because many of your client's strengths and barriers will be the same for each plan.

Step 2: Write 3 things employers need in each area of PADMAN in the column where you see *Employer Needs (My Selling Points)*.

The needs must be for the specific job listed in Step 1. Identifying a lot of needs will lead to lots of great selling points. Do you know how to find the employer needs for this job? ... I suggest that in your cases management meeting you bring the follow items, so your client can:

1. Review a Want Ad for skills and qualities employers need and list them in the appropriate area of PADMAN.
2. Next, review the two-page job description found on Careers Scotland, LearnDirect or the company's web-site for additional skills and qualities employers need and record them in the appropriate area of PADMAN.
3. Lastly, make a Fact Finding phone call or employer visit to fill-in the additional areas of PADMAN so that you have at least 3 for each. You will probably have more than 3 for some areas such as Ability and Attitude.

Step 3: Determine which of the 4 "Prove Its" your client will use to prove they can meet each need. Write it next to the need in the column where you see "My Prove Its"

To determine if your client can prove they can meet each Employer Need, ask the following questions:

1. Why do you think you can do it?
2. When have you done it before?

Based on their response, which of the 4 Prove Its would best prove they can meet that need? ...Share a Story, Demonstrate it, Have a Credible Reference vouch for them, or Offer Quantified Selling Points (QSP). Remember, if they don't stand out, they'll be screened out. ...Prove Its make them stand out!

When creating Prove Its there are three important things to remember.

- Selling Points have to be unique to your client ...because everyone the employer interview says they are hardworking, dependable, and good at the required tasks. Only they can tell their stories, give their QSPs, offer their references or demonstrate it their way.
- Although most employers prefer paid work experience, degrees or certificates to prove you can do the job you are applying for, if your clients paid experience or formal education doesn't match the job they want you can offer proof from other sources such as hobbies, volunteering, self-taught experiences, daily life, sport or civic participation, etc.
- When offering transferable skills from non-paid work you must present them in a manner that is valid to employers, allows them to see why they are transferable and does not create new concerns. Jason's story at the end of these instructions illustrates these three points.

Step 4: List their barriers for each area of PADMAN in the column where you see 4-My Barriers (Employer Concerns).

This Simple Tool Will Help You:

- Create an effective partnership between you and your client.
- Allow clients to discover for themselves whether or not they are qualified for a job, saving you from saying it.
- Discover their selling points, even those from unpaid.
- Discover the issues that are getting them screened out so you can remove them.

The barrier must be for the specific job listed in Step 1. What is a barrier for one job is not necessarily a barrier for another. For example having tattoos and piercing would not be a barrier in a trendy youth focused store, but may for a more traditional retailer. You do not need to list barriers in every PADMAN area if they do not exist. However, if they do exist and you miss them they will become Screen-outs once they start job searching. Do you know how to find barriers? Here are a few ideas:

- Start with any Employer Needs they can't prove they can meet. If they cannot come up with proof when you ask the 2 questions, then their inability to meet that Need make it a "barrier". Move it to the "My Barriers" column. If they are unable to prove they can meet a significant number of the Employer Needs, ask if they think an employer would view them as *the best candidate for the job* given how many areas they have no proof they can do? ...Suggest they consider the next job down on their Reverse Career Path and work to get promoted into this job next. They know, as well as you, how disheartening it is to hear over and over, "*No thanks, your not qualified.*"
- Consider issues that you are aware of that might concern employers which didn't come up when you were investigating Employer Needs. For example: Store Managers want Sale Clerks with nice smiles...so rotting teeth would probably be screened out. However, few employers would say, *I'm looking for people who don't have rotting teeth.*
- Ask experts in the field or people who hire for the position, *What are the main reasons employers screen-out job candidates for this job?* If you know the person well, or are brave, ask them to review all your job search tools for possible barriers.

Step 5. For each barrier explain how several of the SOLAR Solutions could be used to overcome the barrier and let them chose the one they want to use.

EVERY barrier can be removed or minimised by using one (or a combination) of our 5 SOLAR Solution Tools. The book *No One Is Unemployable* can show you how. It is in the your Centre library and offer sample solution for over 88 of the most common barriers.

Step 6. Once you have completed their PADMAN Plan use the next several case management meetings to:

- Develop their Prove Its – help them practice the stories they will tell (keep them brief and on topic), the QSPs they will use in their CV and good answers, how they will demonstrate it, who will be their credible references and when they will contact them.
- Apply their SOLAR Solutions – determine what skills they will need to learn and where they can learn them, discuss outlooks that will be more constructive to their goals and what action accompany the new outlook, brainstorm employers who would not be concern by a barrier they don't want to change, practice good answers they can give in the interview, and discuss where they could find resources they need to overcome a barrier.
- Create a Job Search Plan – create a list of employers they want to contact, discuss "side doors" they could use to get in front of employers as well as traditional techniques they can use. Set a time to regularly re-evaluate which of the job search tools are working, and which are not. If they are not getting interviews look for screen-outs in tools used to approach employers. If they are getting Interviews but not hired, look for screen-outs in their presentation and good answers.

PADMAN ... Discovering How Employer's Think

Presentation & Image: *Do you look, sound and act in a way that positively represents my company?*

A customer's first impression of a company is often made by employees. So the employee's appearance, facial expressions, tone of voice, and style are all very important. Presentation is a big category. It also includes hygiene, handshake, age, race, gender, weight, body language, visible disabilities and obvious lifestyle choices. Perceptions can come from the car you drive, the tools you use, and how you speak, including grammar, accents, impediments, dialect and slang. What an employer wants depends on what the company is trying to tell people about who they are.

Attitude & Personality: *Do I want to work with you and do you fit in to my company culture?*

This is not about having a specific personality like being positive and friendly. It is about reflecting the company's personality. Is the company sophisticated, down-home, cutting-edge, socially-concerned, fun and creative, conservative, high powered, or what? Are you someone the interviewer and the team want to work with 20 or 40 or 60 hours a week? Or, if your job is outside the team, do you have the personality required to get the job done? There are some attitudes that most employers value, including a sincere interest in the field or company, a desire to learn, a willingness to do what's asked, the ability to handle change, an ability to get along with others, and a strong work ethic that compels you to always do your best. When asked to prioritize the six PADMAN areas, most employers rate Attitude as #1 or #2.

Dependability & Trust: *Will you work in the company's best interest?*

Employers need people they can rely on to show-up everyday on-time!... but it runs deeper than that. They need employees they can depend on to meet deadlines, produce the required quality and quantity of work, follow instructions, and stay until the job is done. Dependability also includes emotional stability, childcare, illness, lawsuits, health & safety, and the ability to leave your personal problems at home. They look for people they can trust with their money, their customers, their secrets, their products and their reputations. They want staff who will look out for the company's best interest, so the company succeeds.

Motivation & Loyalty: *Do your actions and goals promote the company and its goals?*

Motivation is a very misunderstood area. Most people think it begins with "taking initiative" and "doing the extra." In reality, it begins with researching the company's goals. Your initiative and extra only count if they help the company achieve *their* goals. Notice that I didn't say your goals, or goals you think the company should have. Motivation, from the employer's perspective, is when your energy is directed toward their goals. Loyalty is also tied to company goals...like how long you plan to stay, and whether you bad-mouth the company or gossip about co-workers... so, watch what you say.

Ability & Aptitude: *Can you do the job, or learn it quickly?*

You know the answer to this question... employers look at your work experience, education, licenses and certifications. But did you know that skills don't come only from paid work history and formal education? They also include your natural talents, hobbies, life and school experiences, volunteering, and even skills gained in unexpected places like prison, a recovery program, or a homeless shelter. Most employers don't expect you to know every aspect of a new job, but they do expect you to be able to learn it quickly.

Network & Contacts: *Do the people you know and attract benefit my company, or cause concern?*

The company needs employees who bring access to new customers and resources the business wants, without attracting a negative element that could drive away target customers or damage the company reputation. Do you know people who could become customers, or generate customers? Do you know experts in the field who would offer you their expertise? Remember though, our network and contacts are not always positive. Do you have friends, family or past business contacts the company would not want to be associated with?

The 4 Prove Its

Stories – Share a true story about a specific time when they successfully did something employers will need them to do when they hire them. Stories create a snap shot of them doing the job. In interviews, employers often ask for stories when they say, “Tell me about a time when you...” Coming to the interview prepared will make your client’s stories more effective and them appear more confident. We suggest they prepare 2-6 stories that prove they can do a specific task the employer needs. Keep the stories to 30-90 seconds so their Prove It doesn’t get lost and they are less likely to “tell on themself”. Having them retell the story until it sounds natural and quickly makes the point. Practice makes perfect.

Demonstration – Seeing is believing! The great thing about demonstration is the employer is watching your client do the very things that prove they can do the job. Employers trust what they see more than what your client will say. Someone who says they’re punctual but arrives 4 minutes late for the interview is not punctual; an applicant who is rude to the receptionist will not be seen as “good with people”, no matter what they say. Remember, demonstration isn’t just offering a sample of your work, volunteering to show your skills, or passing a test in the interview. If the job requires people skills, teach them to appear friendly and professional with everyone you meet. A waitress may want to memorize the menu before the interview to demonstrate her desire to work for “this restaurant” knowing that she will need to memorize it once hired. An Administrative Assistant should demonstrate organizational skills during the job search and interview by researching the company before the interview, having their reference list and an extra CV with them, and send a “Thank you note” after the interview. A Salesperson should make the interviewer feel at ease and be very clear about why they are a “good buy” for the employer. Each client should have 4-6 ways they will demonstrate they can meet the employer’s needs starting with dress the part, being on-time (5 to 15 minutes before) and doing TENS so they appear confident and professional.

Credible References – Employers believe what others say about us long before they take our word for it. So, positive references from people who the employer respects are important in convincing the employer to hire your client. There are two groups of people who are credible to employers... those who have an interest in the company’s success (employees, family, customers, vendors and friends), and those who value their own reputation and won’t tarnish it by vouching for someone the employer will regret hiring (other business owners, teachers, employment specialists who get paid only if you stay and succeed). Help your client identify 2-3 credible people to act as references for them. Don’t assume your client will know how to ask someone to be a referee and what to tell them so their reference is helpful. We suggest sending reference your clients CV, top 6 selling points for they job and why they believe they’d be great for the job. Also, teach your client how to casually mention their credible reference by name or title in the interview as they share something they learned from them or share a comment made by them that would proves your client can meet the employer’s need... “*My mentor, who is on the City Marathon Committee, once asked if I worked for REI because all my gear is from here. I had to say no. But I thought what a great idea because I already believe in and use most the products.*”

Quantified Selling Points (QSPs) – Everyone uses general selling points in the interview... “I’m dependable, hard-working, honest and friendly.” Stand out from the crowd by using QSPs that prove your client meet a specific employer needs using quantified facts and a timeframe. There are 4 types of quantified facts they can use:

- 1) Numbers or percentages (*Have only missed 2 days in 3 years ... Decreased returns by 15%*),
- 2) A comparison (*Served 10% more customers than the average Cashier ... Was Employee of the Month*),
- 3) A list (*Experienced using the entire Microsoft Office Suite, as well as current versions of QuickBooks, Adobe Acrobat and Word Perfect*), or
- 4) Proof of Proficiency (certificate, license, test score, evaluation).

Also, QSPs must be verifiable by a credible source. Who could vouch for the fact?

SOLAR Solution Tools

Learning a New SKILL will remove many barriers. Sometimes the skill needed is vocational like using a computer or getting a certification. Often times it is gaining a soft skill like TENS, how to read a bus or train schedule, how to dress for this job, how create “Prove Its, how to find good childcare or how to use “side doors” to meet the person who can hire them.

Adjust Their OUTLOOK Many of our barriers are the result of our attitudes toward them, and when they adjust their OUTLOOK the barrier disappears. For example if they believe no employer will hire them due to their age, their attitude in the interview will insure they don’t. However, if they adjust their outlook by realising that people their age are hired everyday in this country so they make the effort to develop a good answers and use side doors they will eventually find an employer who needs your positive attitude and skills.

Change Where They LOOK For barriers they can’t change or don’t want to change, the answer is to change where they LOOK. There are thousands of employers, and they all value different things. So find an employer who does not view your clients “barrier” as a problem, or who in fact may view it as a selling point. For example, tattoos may be a barrier for an Up-market Retail Store but a selling point for a Trendy Retail Store where people with tattoos are the primary customer. And, not have computer skills won’t mater if the employer does not need them to use a computer.

Develop a Good ANSWER For any barrier the employer may find out about when they meet your client (age, obvious disability, stuttering), or when they do a reference check (criminal record, being fired), or may come up in the interview (gaps in work history, poor literacy, poor transportation) you must create a good ANSWER. A good answer should do 3 things: reduce the employers concern, meet the employer’s needs and increase your client’s confidence. If it does not do all three then it is not a GOOD answer. So put on your employer’s hat as you listen to them give their answers. Replace scary words such as *burglary, fired, and want to start a family* with “*took some things, contract ended, and right now I am focused on my career.*” Keep it short and to the point – about 60 seconds. If the barrier is a issue of perception (age, gender, disability) then you must prove you are the exception to their belief about people in that group. If it is an event (fired, criminal record) follow the WorkNet process outlined in the Good Answer worksheet.

Find a RESOURCE – Sometimes what they need is help in getting information (colleges that offer the training need, a list of anger management programs, employers who are looking for their skills). Other times, they require an item (professional tools, clothing for the interview, a bus pass, a mobile phone), or a service (resume writing, a recovery program, life coach, emergency housing). Finding and using resources can help them overcome many barriers. I recommend creating a office wide Resource List where information about local resources and specific contacts can be kept. An explanation of how to set up a Resource Rolodex and the types of resource you might need can be found in *WorkNet’s Lessons Learned in the Trenches*. National Office has copies of this valuable resource and of *No One Is Unemployable: Creative Solutions for Overcoming Barriers to Employment*.